

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - MRN: 00099 VICE 009

E.O. 11652: GDS ---- TAGS: EINV, IT

SUBJECT: MANAGERS OF AMERICAN SUBSIDIARIES CAUTIONED RE POLITICAL
DANGERS OF ABRUPT DISMISSAL ACTIONS

REF: NAPLES 0048, 0059, 0068; ROME 1389

1. EVENING, JAN. 31, I HOSTED AN INFORMAL COCKTAIL/MEETING FOR THE
MANAGERS (PRIMARILY ITALIANS) OF AMERICAN SUBSIDIARIES IN THE CAMPANIA

REGION. THE PURPOSE WAS TO CONVEY MY CONCERN REGARDING THE POTENTIAL
POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ACTIONS BY AMERICAN FIRMS TO REDUCE THEIR
WORK FORCE, IN A MOMENT OF ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THIS REGION. FOURTEEN
MANAGERS WERE PRESENT, AND A SIMILAR MESSAGE HAS BEEN CONVEYED TO THE
FIVE WHO WERE UNABLE TO ATTEND.

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2. THE MEETING WAS PROMPTED BY A SERIES OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS,
INCLUDING: (A) GENERAL INSTRUMENT ATTEMPT TO DISMISS 314 WORKERS
(NAPLES 0048 AND 0059; ROME 1389);(B) PRESSURES IN RICHARDSON-
MERRELL, SPERRY SUD, 3M, AND POSSIBLY OTHER AREA FIRMS, TO FOLLOW SUIT

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(NAPLES 0068), AND; (C) A RECENT CALL ON ME BY TOP OFFICIALS OF

NAPLES INDUSTRIALISTS' UNION, TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERN THAT AMERICAN FIRMS WERE NOT CONDUCTING THEMSELVES IN THE SAME MANNER AS ITALIANS, AND RISKED QUOTE GETTING OUT IN FRONT UNQUOTE OF AREA'S ITALIAN FIRMS.

3. DURING MEETING WITH MANAGERS, I MADE CLEAR THAT THE USG DID NOT INTEND TO TELL AMERICAN FIRMS HOW TO CONDUCT THEIR BUSINESS OR TO INTERFERE IN THEIR AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, I DID URGE THAT, IN REACHING DECISIONS WITH THEIR HOME OFFICES, THEY GIVE FULL CONSIDERATION TO THE SPECIAL SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS OF THE SOUTHERN ITALIAN BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT, IN ADDITION TO THE MOMENTARY FINANCIAL OR PRODUCTION DIFFICULTIES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE FIRMS. I ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THEY CONSIDER THE MANNER, PERHAPS SLOWER BUT OFTEN LESS DISRUPTIVE, BY WHICH ITALIAN FIRMS SUCCEED IN REDUCING THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES ON THEIR PAYROLLS. IN CONCLUSION, I POINTED OUT THE DANGERS -- FOR THE AMERICAN FIRMS AND FOR THE USG -- OF AN

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INCREASINGLY ANTI-AMERICAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, WHICH COULD RESULT FROM COINCIDENT, AND SEEMINGLY SOCIALLY IRRESPONSIBLE, ATTEMPTS BY THESE FIRMS TO DISMISS WORKERS.

4. THE ABOVE MESSAGE WAS DELIVERED IN A CORDIAL SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE AND COUCHED IN GENERAL TERMS, TO AVOID SINGLING OUT ANY INDIVIDUAL FIRMS. HOWEVER, COMMENTS MADE BY THE MANAGERS SUBSEQUENT TO THE MEETING, INDICATED THAT THEY WELCOMED THE INITIATIVE AND THAT, WHILE THE MESSAGE WAS CLEARLY CONVEYED, IT CREATED NO RESENTMENT.
HOROWITZ

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